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KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- 24/26

Committee:-	Council
Date:-	10 th July 2024
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Town Clerk
Report Title:-	Neighbourhood Plan for Kettering Central
Wards Affected:-	All

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the extent of the proposed Kettering Central Neighbourhood Plan and to ask the planning authority to designate the intended area accordingly.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to agree that

- a) North Northamptonshire Council be asked to designate the area shown in gold and purple on the plan below as a Neighbourhood Plan area entitled “Central Kettering Neighbourhood Plan”
- b) That the community engagement for the development of this Neighbourhood Plan be designed so that it seeks to inform and engage residents of the whole town, in anticipation that all residents may be entitled to vote in an eventual referendum.

3. Information

- 3.1 At its meeting in April, the Council considered recommendations from the Neighbourhood Planning Committee as to the approach and coverage of a new



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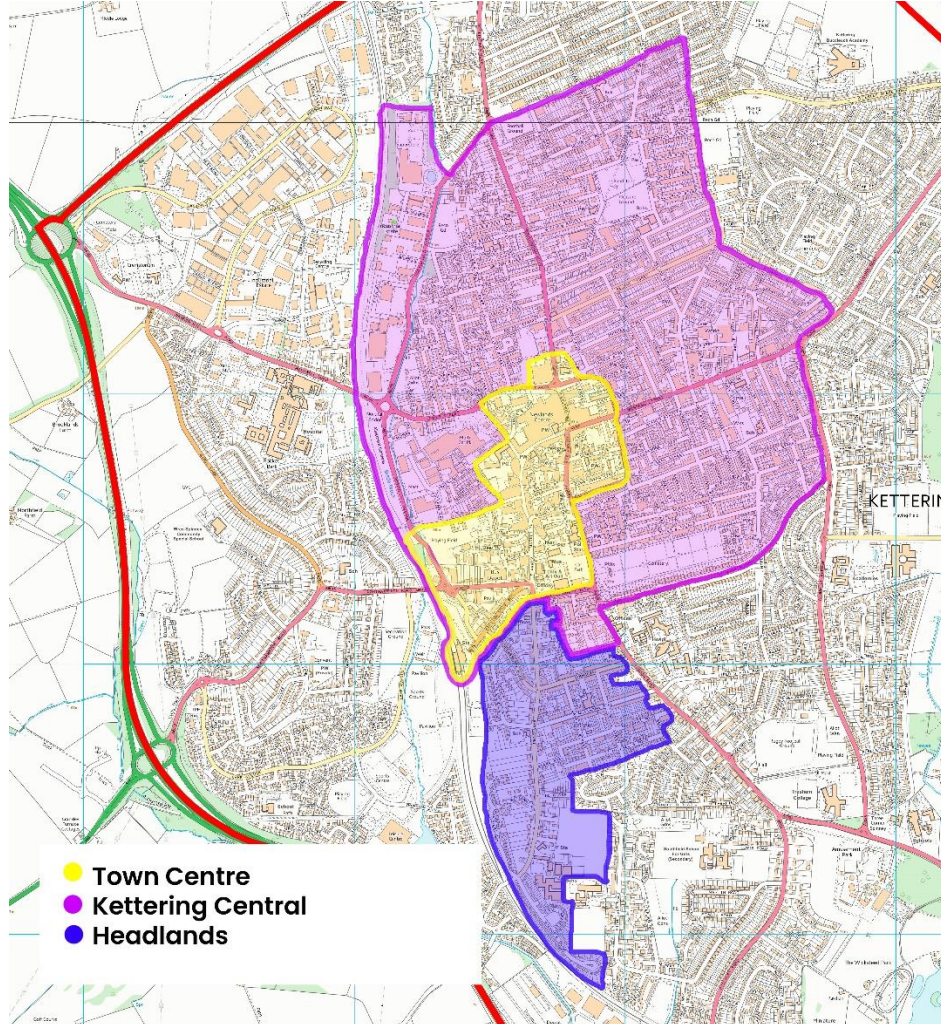
neighbourhood plan, which proposed a plan area co-terminus with the new Kettering central ward for both NNC and KTC. It was agreed at that meeting that a members workshop would be held with all interested members to consider and test the thoughts of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee and secure some external advice as to the best approach to take. That workshop took place on 12th June, with 9 members attending and external input provided by a planning consultant, Neil Homer, Nick Bolton from Electric Places and NNC.

- 3.2. Members heard that there were two broad options to take in designing the geographic area to be covered by a plan – one which covered a defined part of town, including the town centre, or one which covered the whole of Kettering parish, (excluding the Headlands neighbourhood plan area). A hybrid plan, which focused largely on the central area but has some town wide themes - such as movement or open space - might also be possible.
- 3.3. Given that the town centre would form a part of the plan in each case, there was a possibility that the examining inspector would specify that the franchise for the eventual referendum should be extended to the whole parish, even if the plan only covered a part of the town. Anticipating that outcome by having some aspects of the plan that were town wide might be one way of engaging people across town before they were presented with a referendum, but that would make it quite a complex plan to design and consult upon.
- 3.4. The challenge in preparing a town wide plan is that it is much more complex and time consuming and involves a level of policy development and community engagement which might not be manageable. The argument for a town wide plan is that all opportunities are picked up and cross town themes can be addressed in a better way, and it treats Kettering as a single place.
- 3.5. NNC have been asked for advice but have not had the opportunity to provide any.
- 3.6. At the end of the workshop, members considered that the original plan boundaries proposed by the Neighbourhood Planning Committee should, in any case, be extended to include both the area around Rockingham Road Pleasure Park down to Avondale Road, and the small area of The Grove just off London Rd/Bowling Green Rd, on the grounds that these streets were similar in character to the rest of the residential areas already recommended for inclusion. This is the resulting boundary:-



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4. Conclusion

- 4.1. There is simplicity in selecting a defined area and designing a plan which addresses the issues in that area. A hybrid plan which has some “local” polies and some town wide policies would be difficult to describe, manage, and engage with.
- 4.2. Given that the town centre is a key part of any plan, it is legitimate to seek to consult with stakeholders and residents across the whole town and, if necessary have a referendum which is town wide.

5. Consultation and Engagement

A comprehensive programme of consultation and engagement is essential in developing a successful neighbourhood plan.

6. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

6.1. The Council has budgeted £10000 in this financial year and grants of up to £18000, plus technical support packages, can be bid for to support the plan's development.

6.2. The Council cannot proceed without the plan area being designated by the local planning authority. Once the plan area has been designated, it cannot be changed. Without a designation, the Council cannot apply for any grants.

7. Climate change implications

Achieving sustainable development is one of the core objectives of a neighbourhood plan, and themes such as movement, environment, open space can form a critical part of the eventual plan.

8. Policy Implications

The Council has determined that one of its corporate priorities in 2024/5 is making progress with a neighbourhood plan which covers at least the central part of town, including the town centre.

Background Papers

Report to and minutes of Neighbourhood Planning Committee 15th Feb 2024
Reports to and minutes of Council 24th April 2024